Amateur Radio Newsline™ Report 1379 – January 16, 2004

The following is a closed circuit advisory for Amateur Radio Newsline bulletin stations. It is not necessarily for broadcast.

According to Support Fund Administrator Andy Jarema, N6TCQ, Amateur Radio Newsline has only received enough funding of late to keep the service going for another month or so. In other words, the bills from last November have been paid , but now money has to be raised to keep from loosing the phones and e-mail service from bills accrued in December.

Andy says that Newsline continues to exist hand to mouth on a week to week basis. He says that It is up to you and the listeners to make sure that it is funded so that it can continue to provide this vital service. Otherwise he may soon be forced to pull the plug.

Please help us to keep The Amateur Radio Newsline on the air.   Our address is the Amateur Radio Newsline Support Fund, Post Office Box 660937 in Arcadia California. The Zipcode is 91066. Again and as always, we thank you.

That ends the closed circuit advisory with Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1379 with a release date of Friday, January 16, 2004 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. The ARRL Board meets to discuss the future of ham radio and lots of news on the B-P-L front. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1379   coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESTRUCTURING: ARRL BOD MEETS IN CT JAN 16-17 TO DISCUSS WRC-03

Look for some major changes in the structure of the United States Amateur Radio service to be proposed or at least put open to study. This as the American Radio Relay Leagues Board of Directors holds its first annual meeting of 2004 as this newscast goes to air. Amateur Radio Newsline’s Henry Feinberg, K2SSQ, reports:

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What’s to come under the ARRL Board of Directors scrutiny? The ARRL Letter points to the big item being the implementation of changes in US Amateur Radio rules. This, in the wake of World Radiocommunication Conference of 2003.

Among other significant changes, W-R-C 03 delegates agreed last summer to leave up to individual countries whether to require a Morse code test for access to amateur high-frequency allocations. Several nations have already dropped the code testing requirement for High Frequency access. In the United States, the FCC last year invited public comments on 14 Morse-related petitions for rule making, but it has not yet acted on the issue. When it meets, the ARRL Board is expected to discuss in detail recommendations in response to W-R-C 03 that were developed during last November's meeting of the ARRL Executive Committee.

Most observers generally believe that there will not be any major action by the FCC to implement W-R-C 03 changes until it hears from the League. This Board meeting is expected to generate an ARRL position that will be transmitted to the regulatory agency, but you will have to wait until the meeting is over and the League issues its own statement to find out what that position is. We suggest you keep an eye on www.arrl.org the next few days for any breaking news on ARRL Board decisions.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Henry Feinberg, K2SSQ, in New Jersey.

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Among other actions, the Board also will elect members to the Executive Committee and appoint three directors to the ARRL Foundation Board. The Board also will elect officers for the next two years. Incumbent President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, has indicated that he plans to run for a third term. (ARRL Letter, others)

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RESTRUCTURING: IARU REGION 1 TO MEET IN FEB

Meantime the International Amateur Radio Union will be holding its next regional conference in a few weeks. Q-News Graham Kemp, VK4BB, is here with that story:

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The Twelfth Regional Conference Is being held from February 16 - 20, 2004 in Taipei, Taiwan. There are Working Groups, where most if not all the business is discussed and these run parallel to one another. A wealth of information is exchanged on the floor at these Working Groups.

There are formal discussion times and of course many informal discussions and gatherings such as over meals and receptions and so on. Contacts made at these conferences assist when an issue comes up back home, help can be sought on a first name basis.

There will be workshops on two important topics. The first is a Workshop on WRC 2003. It will include a detailed discussion on the new Article 25. To facilitate the discussion, a paper by Michael Owen VK3KI is being circulated with the Conference papers so that all societies will be able to make an advance study and brief their delegation on issues to raise and matters for seeking clarification.

The other Workshop will be on The Society's IARU Liaison Officer. The Workshop will help gain a better appreciation of the duties and responsibilities of the Liaison Officer and hopefully lead to greater satisfaction from the work carried out by Liaison Officers.

Graham Kemp, VK4BB, reporting.
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More information on this upcoming conference can be found on-line at the Japan Amateur Radio Leagues website at www.jarl.or.jp/iaru-r3 (Q-News)

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THE BPL FIGHT: AUSTRIA TURNS OFF ITS BPL

And a big win overseas on the B-P-L front as reported by the ARRL Letter. The Austrian Amateur Transmitter Federation says that a Broadband over Power Line field test in the city of Linz has been cut short as a result of excessive radio interference. According to the national ham radio society, the Government Ministry for Commerce, Innovation and Technology closed down Linz Power Company's B-P-L pilot project because it was generating interference on the HF bands.

Shortwave broadcaster Radio Austria says the case that brought the issue to a head was a Red Cross report. One that documented that emergency services radio traffic during a disaster response drill last May was the victim of massive B-P-L interference. According to the broadcaster, measurements were said to have indicated that radiation from the B-P-L system exceeded permissible field strength levels by a factor of 10,000.

Last fall, Linz amateurs and their national leaders got together with power company representatives in an effort to resolve BPL's incompatibility with High Frequency ham radio operation. The meetings followed news reports of interference to emergency service communications and QRM complaints from several area hams.

The Commerce Ministry Order not only means the end of the Linz B-P-L pilot project. It also perminently curtails any future the deployment of this technology in Austria. (ARRL)

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Break 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the Garland Amateur Radio Clubs repeater serving the city of Garland Texas.

(5 sec pause here)

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THE BPL FIGHT: PANASONIC TO INTRODUCE HOME BPL SYSTEM

A form of Broadband Over Powerline may be coming to a house near you. This as Matsushita Electric announces that it has developed a high-speed home power line IP networking technology capable of high-definition video transmission. Amateur Radio Newsline’s Bruce Tennant, K6PZW has more:

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Best known for its Panasonic-brand products, a newly developed Matsushita Electric technology will make it possible to provide broadband connectivity to every room in a house via existing home power lines. This, using an Panasonic branded adapter about the size of an audiocassette that the company says cannot

be interfere with by radio amateurs.

The adapter contains a power plug, power supply, LAN connector and an L-S-I chipset that converts broadband data into signals that can travel over a power line. The unit connects a broadband Internet link such as D-S-L or optical fiber lines to the existing power lines in the home. According to Panasonic, a user simply plugs the P-L-C adapter into any AC power outlet to create a home broadband networking without installing new cabling.

The most interersting claim being made by Panasonic is that the new technology it calls H-D P-L-C resists interference from other signals such as those from ham radio that the company says often use the same frequencies as wired communications. In order to realize this capability, Panasonic claims that it combined Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing and Wavelet technology to reduce the noise caused by the interference down to one-fifth of typical noise levels. This the company says creates a proprietary interference-resistant and ultra-high-speed modulation-demodulation method without use of additional filter circuitry that eliminates the frequencies where interference is likely to occur. What impact that this new technology will have on over-the-air radio reception by hams and other spectrum users is not addressed.

Panasonic expects to introduce P-L-C adapters for both consumer and office use by the end of 2004 providing that the HomePlug Powerline Alliance determines a final specification in the summer of 2004. An L-S-I chipset will also become commercially available at the same time.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I’m Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, reporting.

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Matsushita Electric and its Panasonic subsidiary exhibited this new Powerline Communications technology at 2004 International CES held last week in Las Vegas. Both companies are members of the HomePlug Alliance which has been working with the ARRL to notch out amateur frequencies from its powerline communications signals. (ARNewsline(tm), CQ -- from news releases)

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THE BPL FIGHT: W1RFI SPEAKS IN PA

Meantime, one of the leading experts in the area of Broadband Over Powerline interference has made his thoughts known. Speaking at Frankford Radio Club meeting on in Philadelphia last Tuesday night, Ed Hare, W1RFI, said that B-P-L is not good news for the radio spectrum. Amateur Radio Newsline’s Mark Abramovich, N-T-3-V, was there and has this report:

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When Ed Hare talks, amateurs and others listen.

During an hour-long presentation at the FRC's meeting on the University of Sciences campus here in Philadelphia, Hare made the case that Broadband Over Power Lines is a threat to the future of the hobby.

"If these B-P-L systems came to my neighborhood, HF Amateur Radio as I know it

would be over," he explains. "I mean S-9 on multiple bands would seriously cripple me.

Oh, we've had more serious threats when Amateur Radio was shut down after the world wars, but this ranks up there with it in terms of the potential to cause harm to the types of Amateur Radio that many of us enjoy doing."

The reason: Hare says B-P-L field tests by a handful of electric utilities use power line systems to carry high-frequency or HF signals to homes and businesses to give them connections to the internet.

"My neighbor's computer system is a local interference problem," he says. "I'm not going to hear the one three blocks up the street.

But Broadband over Power Line, they're going to intentially conduct those signals onto the overhead lines that will run through my house and then they're going to build this as big as an entire neighborhood. Clearly it has a different interference potential."

Hare says he's charted the interference on 20-meters, calculating it on a national and worldwide scale should B-P-L be rolled out.

"The ability of HF to sustain worldwide communication if you have 30-microvolts per meter of noise will not exist," Hare says.

He says the interference potential goes beyond the ham bands.

"This will affect military spectrum, this will affect international broadcasting spectrum, this will affect other government spectrum," Hare says. "This will affect commercial HF spectrum and as I tune outside the ham bands, you know what? That's not a radio wasteland, there's a lot of stuff there."

And, Hare notes, there's serious concern about medical-diagnostic devices.

"I go to my doctor's office, it's a house in a residential neighborhood," Hare says. "And he's going to hook me up to the E-K-G machine to find out whether I'm going to die before the end of the day. And, if that thing's interfered with, maybe I'll get a false positive or a false negative."

Finally, Hare says the amateur community is not alone.

"I'm very pleased to see groups like FEMA, NTIA and others getting involved with this saying essentially the same things ARRL is doing based on their work," Hare says.

"They, too, see a serious inteference potential to HF that needs to be addressed before B-P-L could ever be considered in any way."

For Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz NT3V in Philadelphia.

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More on the fight to stop B-P-L in future Amateur Radio Newsline reports. (ARNewsline(tm))

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RESCUE RADIO: NIUE DEVASTATION REPORTED BY HAM RADIO

>From the rescue radio file, word that radio amateurs became a lifeline when tropical cyclone Heta ripped through the tiny island republic of Niue two weeks ago. The storm left the tropical paradise with no regular means of communicating with the outside world and summoning much needed relief aid. Enter ham radio.

According to news reports, a radio operator on the island put out a a call for help which was answered by Steve McCully, W7TZ/ZF2CQ, in the California community of Oak Hills. In fact, it was McCully who phoned the New Zealand Consul General in Los Angeles and provided that government with its first notification that Niue had been ravaged by 186 mile per hour winds.

More is on-line at http://www.vvdailypress.com/cgi-bin/newspro/viewnews.cgi?newsid1073499379, 43275, http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/SYD184348.htm and http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/pacific/niue/ (CGC, WA6MCL)

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RADIO ALLOCATIONS: RULES FOR 5.9 GHZ INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION ADOPTED

The FCC has adopted service and licensing rules for the 5.9 GHz Band for Dedicated Short Range Communications or D-S-R-C. This, from 5.850 to 5.925 Ghz in the Intelligent Transportation Systems Radio Service.

According to the Commission, DSRC systems will provide a limited-range, wireless link to transfer information between vehicles traveling at high speeds and roadside units or other vehicles. Some examples include intersection collision avoidance, work zone warnings, road condition warnings, electronic toll collections, and electronic payment for gas, fast food, or parking.

More is on the web at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-242309A1.doc (CGC)

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ENFORCEMENT: 10 METERS NON-HAMS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Three new non ham radio intruders to the 10 meter band have been monitored down-under by Wayne Featherstone VK4ZRT. All appear to be Asian in location and all operate the A3E mode at around 0700 U-T-C. Listen for them on 28.215, 28.225 decimal 25 and on 28.285 Mhz. (Q-News)

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ENFORCEMENT: $5.4 MILLION DOLLAR FAX FINE

Some good news for anyone who is sick and tired of getting unsolicited junk faxes. Federal regulators approved a record $5.4 million fine against a company for faxing unsolicited
advertisements to consumers.

The five-member commission unanimously approved the penalty on Wednesday,

December 31st but did not announce its decision until Monday, January 5th. The FCC said Fax.com accrued the penalty because it violated the rules 489 separate times incurring an $11,000 fine for each instance. In affirming the fine the commission rejected arguments from Fax.com that the ban on unsolicited faxes was unconstitutional and that the fine was excessive.

The Federal Communications Commission said the fine given to Fax.com, Inc. was the largest ever for violating do-not-fax rules that went into effect in 1992. Fax.com sends faxes on behalf of clients that pay a fee. Its website claims that the company offers the industry's largest fax number database of more than 30 million numbers. Company officials did not immediately respond to a requests from the media for comment. (FCC)

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COMMUNICATIONS LAW: BLAME THE COMPUTER

Prosecutors looking to throw the book at accused computer hackers have come across a legal defense. In four words, “the computer did it.” And in this era of hijacked PCs and laptops, jury’s are believing it.

In one case in the U-K, nineteen year old Aaron Caffrey was recently acquitted on charges of hacking into the computer system of the Houston Pilots back in 2001. Houston Pilots is an independent contractor for the Port of Houston.

Caffrey had been charged with breaking into the system and crippling the server that provides scheduling information for all ships entering the world's sixth-largest port. Although authorities traced the hack back to Caffrey's computer, he claimed that someone must have remotely planted a "trojan program" onto it. That it was the trojan and not him that did the hacking. (Published reports)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today’s radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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HAMFESTS AND CONVENTIONS: THE 44TH MIAMI TROPICAL HAMBOREE

Turning to the hamfest and convention scene, the 2004 season really kicks off the weekend of February 7th and 8th. This, when the doors of the Miami Dade County Fair Expo Center in Florida swing open to welcome the 44th Tropical Hamboree.

This years Hamboree has a long list of great programs with speakers that include such notables as ARRL President Haynie W5JPB, FCC chief rules enforcer Riley Hollingsworth K4ZDH, IARU President Larry Price W4RA, CQ Communications' Rich Moseson W2VU and Radio School's Gordon West WB6NOA. They will take part

in a free form round-table discussion of the future of the Amateur Radio service. Moseson and West will later join Florida's own Sherri Bower, W4STB, in the conventions Public Relations Forum.

Attendees will also get to hear the latest DXpedition Adventures presented by South Florida DX Association and learn about Amateur Radio at the National Hurricane Center. There will be lots of vendors and all the other niceties that make the Miami Tropical Hamboree a must attend on the convention circuit. The event is sponsored by the Dade Radio Club of Miami, Inc. More information is on-line at www.hamboree.org (Tropical Hamboree)

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HAMFESTS AND CONVENTIONS: CHARLOTTE COUNTY HAMFEST

Meantime, March 6th is the date for the Charlotte County Hamfest in Englewood, Minnesota. Sponsored by the Englewood Amateur Radio Society, the event will feature swap tables, tailgating and overnight hookups for those bringing a recreational vehicle. The venue is the Charlotte County Fairgrounds and you can find out more in cyberspace at www.earsradioclub.org (Worldradio)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AIR LEAK ON ISS LEADS TO CONTACT CANCELLATION

A small air leak on board the International Space Station forced cancellation of the Monday, January 12th scheduled contact with the Armstrong Middle School in Flint, Michigan. The I-S-S recently began experiencing the slight loss of air pressure, which the crew had to locate and repair. This meant that they had to devote all their time to resolving this issue using special ultrasonic monitoring. The leak was located and repaired late the same day. Contacts missed are in the process of being rescheduled. (ARISS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: UPDATE ON OPERATIONS FROM ARISS

We also have an update on what's happening with the new radio gear on board the International Space Station and why hams on the ground heard un proto packets for a while. Amateur Radio Newsline's David Black, KB4KCH, is here with the details:

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Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, is the Chairman of ARISS. Amateur Radio on the International Space Station. And Bauer says that he has been sifting through the many e-mails he has received over the past few days regarding ham radio operations from the orbiting outpost.

Bauer says that the new Kenwood D 700 radio recently delivered to the ISS is still in what he terms as its "raw" form. In other words, the ARISS team has not yet run a formal engineering checkout of the new hardware and the ISS crew has not gotten the operations procedures uplinked to them.

According to Bauer, at this point in time the Kenwood radio system is not properly configured for digital operations. A reconfiguration change occurred after it was brought on line which has led to this issue. So, what hams see in

the way of packets coming from the station right now will probably not be what they will see in the future.

As to the signal fading problem Bauer says that its probably due to the antenna that's currently in use. The astro-hams are now using the new antenna system located on the Service Module and is a single, bottom mounted unit. Since the structure of ISS is very large, it is quite possible that the ham radio signals are getting some blockage.

Bauer says that ARISS will continue to evaluate the antenna system performance. He notes that there are now 4 antenna systems that can support 2 meter and 70 cm operation. This says Bauer gives a lot of possibilities with the antennas, including signal splitting, if need be.

As to the packet signals heard during a recent school contact? Those who heard it heard history being made. The first ever multiple radio operations from the International Space Station. While the older Ericsson radio system was doing the school contact, the new Kenwood radio system was active doing packet. It was also -- perhaps -- the first man made Q-R-M from space.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm David Black, KB4KCH

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Bauer says that the astro-hams kind of surprised everyone on the ground by getting the radio system installed much earlier than they had anticipated. As a result, the Amateur Radio on the International Spasce Station team has been working feverishly with the space agencies to get the procedures uplinked and engineering checkouts scheduled. (ARISS)

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INTERNATIONAL - INDIA: HAM RADIO AT THE CHILDREN'S SCIENCE CONGRESS

On the international scene, ham radio was a part of India's 11th National Children Science Congress. Organized by the an educational group in the city of Lucknow the event ran from the 27th to the 31st December with more than 2000 students, teachers and science promoters from various parts of that nation taking part.

According to VU2DCT, Lucknow hams were also called by program organizers to give the demonstration on Amateur Radio for the benefit of participants. Most of attendees were astonished to listen a live QSO between VU2WAP and a ham in Columbia, South America. During their presentation the hams emphasized the role of Amateur Radio in disaster situations. (Q-News)

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INTERNATIONAL - SOUTH KOREA: HOMEGROWN SOFTWARE IS BEST

South Korea is considering requiring mobile phone operators to use locally developed software for downloading music and games. According to news reports, that nations Information and Communication Ministry is pushing for the compulsory use of in-country developed software for downloading on new mobile phones in order to standardize the wireless Internet platform.

South Korea is Asia's third largest mobile market and one of the fastest-growing wireless Internet markets. As of the beginning of 2004 there are 33.44 million mobile phone subscribers, or about 70 percent of the country's 48 million population. (Science Today)

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DX

In D-X, word that the Five Star DX'ers Association has announced plans for a very large-scale DXpedition to Rodrigues Island in March and April next year. The callsign will be 3B9C. An international team of nearly 30 will operate no fewer than 15 separate stations will take to the air on virtually every band and mode possible. The Five Star DX'ers Association is the same group that organized the very successful operation from the Spratly Islands in 1998 and the subsequent record breaking D68C DXpedition to the Comoros in February 2001. (IRTS)

Also, word that DJ4KW and D-K-9-G-G will be active from Belize until the end of February. Callsigns being used are V31YN on CW and V31GW on RTTY. Activity is on 160 through 10 meters. Please QSL as directed on the air. (OPDX)

And for those of you who perfer your D-X and D-X awards a bit higher in frequency, Peter Heins, N6ZE says that he will be able to conduct VUCC field checking in Springfield, Massachusettes several times during the next few weeks. You must be a current ARRL member to avail yourself of this service. Those wanting to take advantage of Pete's offer should e-mail him as soon as possible to n6ze@aol.com (N6ZE)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: THE POTTY MOUTH AND THE VURGER

And finally this weeek, customers at a Troy, Michigan Burger King are getting something extra with their orders that's a little harder to swallow than a hamburger and fries. And its coming by radio. Rick Johnson, KA9VZD, is here with a complete menu on this one:

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The Detroit News is reporting that police in nearby Troy are looking for the person who has found a way to broadcast on the same frequency as a local Burger King drive-through radio system. The jammer has interrupted business transactions with obscene remarks on several occasions that have startled customers.

The most recent incident took place on January 8th. It happened when the manager went outside to apologize to customers and look for the source of the salty talk. Suddenly a voice boomed from the speaker and said -- quote: "There's nothing you or the police can do about this, so get your fat -- err -- lets say posterior -- take your fat posterior back inside and take your goons with you."

Police suspect the calls are being made by a mobile radio transmitter or walkie-talkie in the vacinity of the restaurant. Illegal use of any telecommunications device is a misdemeanor in the city of Troy. And as we all know, its also a serious violation of Federal law.

Heading out the door for some fast food, I’m Rick Johnson, KA9VZD, reporting for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

Hey -- can you make that a double cheeseburger and a double order of rings. Yeah and hold the mayo....

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Sounds as if the story made Rick a bit hungry. And oh yes. Troy police say that they have the FCC for assistance to track down this all beef potty-mouth with a mustard laced tongue. (ARNewsline(tm) from vasrious sources)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I’m Norm Seeley, KI7UP, in Scottsdale Arizona saying 73 and we thank you for listening. Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) is Copyright 2004. All rights reserved.